



[4910-13-P]

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2019-0254; Product Identifier 2019-NM-011-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus SAS Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: We propose to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) for certain Airbus SAS Model A318 and A319 series airplanes, Model A320-211, -212, -214, -216, -231, -232, and -233 airplanes, and Model A321-111, -112, -131, -211, -212, -213, -231, and -232 airplanes. This proposed AD was prompted by a report that cracks were detected on frame (FR) 16 and FR 20 web holes and passenger door intercostal fitting holes at the door stop fitting locations. This proposed AD would require repetitive rototest inspections of the holes at the door stop fittings for any cracking, and corrective actions if necessary, as specified in an European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD, which will be incorporated by reference. We are proposing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: We must receive comments on this proposed AD by [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: You may send comments, using the procedures found in 14 CFR 11.43 and 11.45, by any of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.
- Fax: 202-493-2251.
- Mail: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20590.
- Hand Delivery: Deliver to Mail address above between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

For the incorporation by reference (IBR) material described in the “Related IBR material under 1 CFR part 51” section in SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION, contact EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 89990 1000; email ADs@easa.europa.eu; Internet www.easa.europa.eu. You may find this IBR material on the EASA website at <https://ad.easa.europa.eu>. You may view this IBR material at the FAA, Transport Standards Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206-231-3195. It is also available in the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov>.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2019-0254; or in person at Docket Operations between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

The AD docket contains this NPRM, the regulatory evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for Docket Operations (telephone 800-647-5527) is in the ADDRESSES section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sanjay Ralhan, Aerospace Engineer, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone and fax 206-231-3223.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

We invite you to send any written relevant data, views, or arguments about this proposal. Send your comments to an address listed under the ADDRESSES section. Include “Docket No. FAA-2019-0254; Product Identifier 2019-NM-011-AD” at the beginning of your comments. We specifically invite comments on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of this NPRM. We will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend this NPRM based on those comments.

We will post all comments we receive, without change, to <http://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information you provide. We will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact we receive about this NPRM.

Discussion

The EASA, which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA AD 2018-0289, dated December 21, 2018 (“EASA AD 2018-0289”) (also referred to as the Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information, or “the MCAI”), to correct an unsafe condition for certain Airbus SAS Model A318 and A319 series airplanes, Model A320-211, -212, -214, -216, -231, -232, and -233 airplanes, and Model A321-111, -112, -131, -211, -212, -213, -231, and -232 airplanes. The MCAI states:

During accomplishment of airworthiness limitations item (ALI) task 531103-01-1 on an aeroplane, a crack was found in an affected area. At the time of the inspection, the affected aeroplane had accumulated 27[,]340 flight cycles (FC) since first flight, which is significantly below the FC threshold required for that ALI task.

This condition, if not detected and corrected, could affect the structural integrity of FR16 and FR20 of the aeroplane.

To address this potential unsafe condition, Airbus developed a[n optional] modification (cold working), which reinforces the affected area and allows accomplishment of the next inspection at extended threshold. Airbus also revised the threshold for the inspection of the affected area for pre-mod aeroplanes, and published these thresholds in new ALI tasks 531103-01-2 and 531103-01-3. EASA published AD 2017-0231 [which corresponds to FAA AD 2018-25-02, Amendment 39-19513 (83 FR 62690, December 6, 2018) (“AD 2018-25-02”)], requiring, among others, accomplishment of those ALI tasks.

Since that [EASA] AD was issued, it was decided to replace the applicable ALI tasks with the inspection SB [service bulletin] and modification SB. Consequently, both ALI tasks 531103-01-2 and 531103-01-3 will be deleted at the next opportunity of the applicable Airbus airworthiness

limitations section document for the aircraft models affected by this [EASA] AD.

For the reason stated above, this [EASA] AD requires repetitive [rototest] inspections of the affected areas and, depending on findings, accomplishment of applicable corrective action(s). This [EASA] AD also includes reference to the applicable [optional] modification SB which provides an optional terminating action for the repetitive inspections [which includes a visual inspection of the intercostal fitting and frame web for damage (including corrosion) and corrective action if necessary] required by this [EASA] AD, or allows deferral of the next inspection, depending on the timing of modification embodiment.

Related IBR Material Under 1 CFR part 51

EASA AD 2018-0289 describes procedures for repetitive rototest inspections of the holes at the door stop fittings for any cracking, and corrective actions if necessary. This material is reasonably available because the interested parties have access to it through their normal course of business or by the means identified in the ADDRESSES section, and it is publicly available through the EASA website.

FAA's Determination and Requirements of this Proposed AD

This product has been approved by the aviation authority of another country, and is approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to our bilateral agreement with the State of Design Authority, we have been notified of the unsafe condition described in the MCAI referenced above. We are proposing this AD because we evaluated all pertinent information and determined an unsafe condition exists and is likely to exist or develop on other products of the same type design.

Proposed Requirements of this NPRM

This proposed AD would require accomplishing the actions specified in EASA AD 2018-0289 described previously, as incorporated by reference, except for any differences identified as exceptions in the regulatory text of this AD.

Explanation of Required Compliance Information

In the FAA's ongoing efforts to improve the efficiency of the AD process, the FAA worked with Airbus and EASA to develop a process to use certain EASA ADs as the primary source of information for compliance with requirements for corresponding FAA ADs. As a result, EASA AD 2018-0289 will be incorporated by reference in the FAA final rule. This proposed AD would, therefore, require compliance with the provisions specified in EASA AD 2018-0289, except for any differences identified as exceptions in the regulatory text of this proposed AD. Service information specified in EASA AD 2018-0289 that is required for compliance with EASA AD 2018-0289 will be available on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2019-0254 after the FAA final rule is published.

Clarification of Compliance Time Date

Table 1 of EASA AD 2018-0289 refers to a compliance time "after 31 May 2017," which EASA stated is the "reference date for the compliance time included in ALS Part 2 rev. 6." However, this AD requires using a compliance time after May 31, 2018 (which is the effective date of task 531103-01-1 in "ALS Part 2 rev. 6"). This clarification has been coordinated with EASA.

Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this proposed AD affects 1,229 airplanes of U.S. registry. We estimate the following costs to comply with this proposed AD:

Estimated costs for required actions

Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost per product	Cost on U.S. operators
33 work-hours X \$85 per hour = \$2,805	\$0	\$2,805	\$3,447,345

We estimate the following costs to do any necessary on-condition actions that would be required based on the results of any required actions. We have no way of determining the number of aircraft that might need this on-condition action:

Estimated costs for on-condition actions

Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost per product
51 work-hours X \$85 per hour = \$4,335	\$350	\$4,685

We have received no definitive data that would enable us to provide cost estimates for the on-condition repairs specified in this proposed AD.

Authority for this Rulemaking

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs, describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

We are issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: “General requirements.” Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

This proposed AD is issued in accordance with authority delegated by the Executive Director, Aircraft Certification Service, as authorized by FAA Order 8000.51C. In accordance with that order, issuance of ADs is normally a function of the Compliance and Airworthiness Division, but during this transition period, the Executive Director has delegated the authority to issue ADs applicable to transport category airplanes and associated appliances to the Director of the System Oversight Division.

Regulatory Findings

We determined that this proposed AD would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This proposed AD would not have a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national Government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify this proposed regulation:

1. Is not a “significant regulatory action” under Executive Order 12866;

2. Is not a “significant rule” under the DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979);

3. Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska; and

4. Will not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA proposes to amend 14 CFR part 39 as follows:

PART 39 - AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES

1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

§ 39.13 [Amended]

2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new airworthiness directive (AD):

Airbus SAS: Docket No. FAA-2019-0254; Product Identifier 2019-NM-011-AD.

(a) Comments Due Date

We must receive comments by [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to the Airbus SAS airplanes specified in paragraphs (c)(1) through (c)(4) of this AD, certificated in any category, as identified in European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2018-0289, dated December 21, 2018 (“EASA AD 2018-0289”).

(1) Model A318-111, -112, -121, and -122 airplanes.

(2) Model A319-111, -112, -113, -114, -115, -131, -132, and -133 airplanes.

(3) Model A320-211, -212, -214, -216, -231, -232, and -233 airplanes.

(4) Model A321-111, -112, -131, -211, -212, -213, -231, and -232 airplanes.

(d) Subject

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 53, Fuselage.

(e) Reason

This AD was prompted by a report that cracks were detected on frame (FR) 16 and FR 20 web holes and passenger door intercostal fitting holes at the door stop fitting locations. We are issuing this AD to address such cracking, which could adversely affect the structural integrity of the airplane.

(f) Compliance

Comply with this AD within the compliance times specified, unless already done.

(g) Requirements

Except as specified in paragraph (h) of this AD: Comply with all required actions and compliance times specified in, and in accordance with, EASA AD 2018-0289.

(h) Exceptions to EASA AD 2018-0289

(1) For purposes of determining compliance with the requirements of this AD: Where EASA AD 2018-0289 refers to its effective date, this AD requires using the effective date of this AD.

(2) The “Remarks” section of EASA AD 2018-0289 does not apply to this AD.

(3) Where Table 1 of EASA AD 2018-0289 refers to a compliance time “after 31 May 2017,” this AD requires using a compliance time after May 31, 2018 (the effective date of task 531103-01-1 in “ALS Part 2 rev. 6”).

(i) Other FAA AD Provisions

The following provisions also apply to this AD:

(1) *Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)*: The Manager, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, send your request to your principal inspector or local Flight Standards District Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the International Section, send it to the attention of the person identified in paragraph (j)(2) of this AD. Information may be emailed to: 9-ANM-116-AMOC-REQUESTS@faa.gov. Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the local flight standards district office/certificate holding district office.

(2) *Contacting the Manufacturer*: For any requirement in this AD to obtain instructions from a manufacturer, the instructions must be accomplished using a method

approved by the Manager, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA; or EASA; or Airbus SAS's EASA Design Organization Approval (DOA). If approved by the DOA, the approval must include the DOA-authorized signature.

(3) *Required for Compliance (RC)*: For any service information referenced in EASA AD 2018-0289 that contains RC procedures and tests: Except as required by paragraph (i)(2) of this AD, RC procedures and tests must be done to comply with this AD; any procedures or tests that are not identified as RC are recommended. Those procedures and tests that are not identified as RC may be deviated from using accepted methods in accordance with the operator's maintenance or inspection program without obtaining approval of an AMOC, provided the procedures and tests identified as RC can be done and the airplane can be put back in an airworthy condition. Any substitutions or changes to procedures or tests identified as RC require approval of an AMOC.

(j) Related Information

(1) For information about EASA AD 2018-0289, contact the EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 89990 6017; email ADs@easa.europa.eu; Internet www.easa.europa.eu. You may find this EASA AD on the EASA website at <https://ad.easa.europa.eu>. You may view this EASA AD at the FAA, Transport Standards Branch, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 206-231-3195. EASA AD 2018-0289 may be found in the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2019-0254.

(2) For more information about this AD, contact Sanjay Ralhan, Aerospace Engineer, International Section, Transport Standards Branch, FAA, 2200 South 216th St., Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone and fax 206-231-3223.

Issued in Des Moines, Washington, on May 1, 2019.

Michael Kaszycki,
Acting Director,
System Oversight Division,
Aircraft Certification Service.

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